BRITISH COLUMBIA
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BC Stats

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This is the final issue of Current Statistics. Resource constraints at BC Stats require that we consolidate or eliminate some of our statistical products and services. Readers looking for the highlights section (lead pages with bulleted synopsis) are directed to *Infoline*: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/infoline.asp
For data tables, please see *Business Indicators*: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/pr_bi.asp which will include a Performance/Forecast page commencing with the next issue.

- The Canadian economy continued to gain momentum in the first quarter, expanding 1.5% (seasonally adjusted). The quarterly increase in real gross domestic product (GDP) was the strongest recorded since late 1999.

  With three quarters of accelerating growth, the economy appears to be back on an expansionary path, but there were some mixed signals in the economic news. Consumer, business and government spending expanded 1.1%, marginally less than the 1.2% increase recorded late last year. Consumer spending picked up (+1.1%), and business investment continued to recuperate (+ 2.3%), driven in part by the housing sector (+5.4%) and spending on new machinery and equipment (+1.8%). However, investment in non-residential structures fell (-1.4%) for a sixth straight quarter.

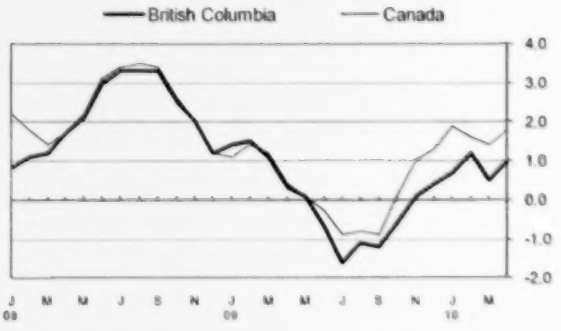
  Consumer spending and business purchases of equipment helped boost the value of imports (+3.4%). Export growth remained robust (+2.9%), but was also lower than in the fourth quarter of 2009. The acceleration in the overall growth rate was largely due to rising inventory levels, as businesses began to build up their stock of inventories for the first time since late 2008.
  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **British Columbia's unemployment rate dropped to 7.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in April as employers took on more workers (+0.6%).** This marked the most significant employment growth in the province since September 2009. Job figures in the province have been trending upwards since the beginning of the year, and April's gain helped rebuild the momentum following a stagnant March (+0.0%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The number of British Columbians receiving regular employment insurance (EI) benefits was 80,020 in March, just slightly lower (-0.1% *seasonally adjusted*) than the previous month.** With the exception of PEI (+0.6%), all provinces recorded a decline in recipients, such that the number of beneficiaries nation-wide dropped by 3.5% (to 668,060). The most substantial shrinkages were seen in Ontario (-5.9% from February) and Alberta (-5.6%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate climbed to 1.0% in April (up from 0.5% in March) as the cost of energy products jumped 10.9%.** Excluding energy, the overall increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) would have been just 0.1%.

BC and Canada Inflation Trend
(% change, same month of previous year)



Inflation rates in Vancouver (+1.4%) were somewhat higher than the BC average in April while Victoria's (+0.4%) was notably lower.
Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Retail sales in the province inched up (+0.6%, *seasonally adjusted*) in March, following a flat February.** Canadian sales climbed (+2.1%) for the fourth consecutive month, largely the result of higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers (+3.6%). Sales were up in all provinces with Newfoundland & Labrador (+3.1%), Quebec (+2.8%) and Ontario (+2.7%) leading the pack. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's wholesalers saw sales climb 2.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March, marking the fifth increase in the past six months.**

- **The value of British Columbia's exports rose 1.5% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March.** This increase was largely due to a 5.8% jump in industrial and consumer goods shipped, with machinery & equipment and automobile exports responsible for the balance of the expansion. Shipments of forestry products stalled in March after rising in each of the five previous months.

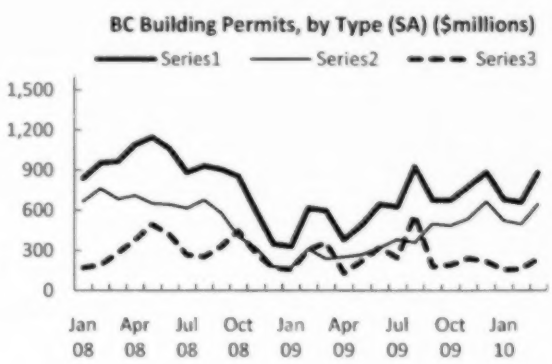
  Exports to the US were up 2.7%, an increase that was almost entirely the result of a surge (+27.8%) in shipments of industrial and consumer goods. A 10.0% hike in the value of energy products destined for overseas countries was also registered in March. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Manufacturing sales in British Columbia advanced 3.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March.** A double-digit jump in transportation equipment (+24.4%) as well as increased shipments from food (+4.3%) and paper (+7.2%) manufacturers were responsible for the lion's share of the overall expansion. Makers of wood products also saw higher sales in April (+3.1%).

  Nationally, manufacturing sales rose 1.2% with food (+3.5%) and motor vehicle manufacturers (+3.6%) providing the largest contributions. Gains were posted in every province ranging from 0.1% in Quebec to 45.0% in Newfoundland and Labrador. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **BC's sawmills ramped up production in March, generating 33.3% more lumber than in the same month last year.** While Coastal mills experienced a slight drop in the output of lumber (-2.2%), Interior sawmills, representing nearly 90% of BC's lumber production, saw a surge of more than a third (+37.9%). On a year-to-date basis, the amount of lumber produced in the province has increased by nearly a quarter (+22.3%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The value of building permits issued by the province's municipalities showed continued volatility in March, surging 33.4% (*seasonally adjusted*), after falling 2.8% in February.** Residential permits climbed 29.7%, pairing with an even more substantial jump in non-residential building projects (+44.8%). Planned spending on institutional projects more than doubled (+110.7%) and permits for commercial buildings (+33.1%) also grew. Meanwhile, industrial projects (-15.5%) were on the decline, following a strong February (+64.4%). The strength in institutional projects was fuelled mostly by planned spending on educational building projects in the province. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*



- **Housing starts in British Columbia climbed 13.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) in April.** Urban starts jumped even higher, up 16.4% compared to the previous month, an increase that virtually matched the substantial decline registered in March. Most of the increase can be credited to a soaring number of new multiple unit projects (+28.3%). Nationally, housing starts were up 1.3% in April. *Data Source: CMHC*

MONTHLY STATISTICS

	UNITS	REFERENCE PERIOD	CURRENT			MONTHLY AVERAGE YEAR-TO-DATE	
			LATEST MONTH	% CHANGE FROM LAST MONTH	% CHANGE FROM YEAR AGO	AMOUNT	% CHANGE FROM YEAR AGO
PRICES							
Consumer Price Index-BC	2002=100	Apr '10	113.2	0.5	1.0	112.8	0.8
Consumer Price Index-Vancouver	2002=100	Apr '10	114.2	0.5	1.4	113.7	1.1
Consumer Price Index-Victoria	2002=100	Apr '10	112.4	0.4	0.4	112.1	0.6
Consumer Price Index-Canada	2002=100	Apr '10	116.0	0.3	1.8	115.6	1.7
Consumer Price Index-USA	1982-84=100	Apr '10	218.0	0.2	2.2	217.3	2.3
Industry Price Index-Canada	1997=100	Mar '10	116.5	-0.4	-1.3	116.8	-0.7
LABOUR							
Unemployment Rate (SA)*-BC	Percent	Apr '10	7.3	(7.9)	(7.6)	7.8	(7.1)
Unemployment Rate (SA)-Canada	Percent	Apr '10	8.1	(8.2)	(8.1)	8.2	(7.9)
Unemployment Rate (SA)-USA	Percent	Feb '10	9.7	(9.7)	(8.1)	9.7	(7.9)
Unemployed (SA)-BC	Thousand	Apr '10	180.7	-7.5	-2.5	192.2	11.3
Employed (SA)-BC	Thousand	Apr '10	2,302.6	0.6	2.2	2,290.9	1.6
Labour Force (SA)-BC	Thousand	Apr '10	2,483.3	-0.1	1.8	2,483.1	2.3
Participation Rate (SA)-BC	Percent	Apr '10	66.0	(66.2)	(66.1)	66.2	(65.9)
Regular EI Benefits Paid	$Million	Mar '10	150.9	5.4	-3.1	156.8	21.7
Regular EI Beneficiaries	Persons	Mar '10	93,040	-1.3	-4.8	94,953	12.0
Average Weekly Wage Rate-BC	Dollars	Apr '10	820.44	-0.1	2.3	816.92	2.4
Wages and Salaries-BC (SA)	$Million	Dec '09	7,530.4	0.7	-1.0	7,424.3	-1.9
Fixed-Weighted Earnings Index-BC	1996=100	Mar '10	125.1	0.0	1.5	125.0	1.6
PRODUCTION - BC							
Lumber-Cubic Metres	Thousand	Feb '10	2,087.1	-7.2	33.3	2,168.1	22.3
Market Pulp Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Mar '10	329	-6.3	14.2	337	15.8
Newsprint Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Mar '10	33	0.0	-13.2	35	-8.6
Other Paper Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Mar '10	137	22.3	0.0	126	-2.6
Coal-Tonnes	Thousand	Feb '10	2,079.0	6.2	22.9	2,019.0	34.1
Oil-Cubic Metres	Thousand	Dec '09	106.4	2.7	-2.2	106.0	-5.2
Natural Gas-Cubic Metres	Million	Mar '09	2,956.6	11.5	8.5	2,857.8	9.8
Electric Power Generated	GW.h	Feb '10	5,759.3	-13.7	6.0	6,216.0	6.4
Manufacturing Shipments (SA)	$Million	Mar '10	2,993.9	3.8	9.6	2,912.9	6.5
GENERAL							
Housing Starts-All Areas BC(SAAR)**	Thousand	Apr '10	28.3	13.7	128.2	27.8	112.2
Housing Starts-USA (SAAR)**	Thousand	Feb '10	575.0	-5.9	0.2	593.0	11.7
Building Permits-BC (SA)	$Million	Mar '10	881.1	33.4	47.5	740.4	44.0
Residential-BC (SA)	$Million	Mar '10	644.9	29.7	171.2	555.4	131.1
Non-Residential-BC (SA)	$Million	Mar '10	236.1	44.8	-34.3	185.0	-32.5
Retail Sales (NAICS) (SA)-BC	$Million	Jan '10	4,634.3	0.0	5.6	4,634.3	5.6
Wholesale Trade (NAICS) (SA)-BC	$Million	Jan '10	4,387.9	4.0	7.3	4,387.9	7.3
Tourism Room Revenues (SA)-BC	$Thousand	Jan '10	148,848	3.3	-0.9	148,848	-0.9
Business Bankruptcies-BC	Number	Feb '10	18	-35.7	-62.5	23	-37.0
Consumer Bankruptcies-BC	Number	Feb '10	810	16.7	-8.9	752	-9.2
Incorporations-BC	Number	Apr '10	2,547	-5.3	24.6	2,481	34.9
Exports Originating in BC (SA)	$Million	Mar '10	2,290.2	1.5	3.8	2,250.0	-0.3

May 28, 2010

*SA indicates seasonal adjustment.
**SAAR indicates seasonally adjusted at annual rates.
Brackets () indicate that rates are shown instead of percentage changes.

ANNUAL STATISTICS

	UNITS	YEAR				PERCENT CHANGE		
		2009	2008	2007	2006	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
PRICES								
Consumer Price Index-BC	2002=100	112.3	112.3	110.0	108.1	0.0	2.1	1.8
Consumer Price Index-Vancouver	2002=100	112.9	112.8	110.2	108.0	0.1	2.4	2.0
Consumer Price Index-Victoria	2002=100	111.9	111.8	109.8	108.5	0.1	1.8	1.2
Consumer Price Index-Canada	2002=100	114.4	114.1	111.5	109.1	0.3	2.3	2.2
Consumer Price Index-USA*	1982-84=100	214.5	215.3	207.3	201.6	-0.4	3.8	2.9
Industry Price Index-Canada*	1997=100	116.5	120.6	115.6	113.8	-3.4	4.3	1.6
LABOUR								
Unemployment Rate-BC	Percent	7.6	4.6	4.2	4.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployment Rate-Canada	Percent	8.3	6.1	6.0	6.3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployment Rate-USA*	Percent	9.3	5.8	4.6	4.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployed-BC	Thousand	185.9	111.6	100.0	109.6	66.6	11.6	-8.8
Employed-BC	Thousand	2,259.4	2,314.3	2,266.3	2,195.5	-2.4	2.1	3.2
Labour Force-BC	Thousand	2,445.3	2,425.9	2,366.4	2,305.1	0.8	2.5	2.7
Participation Rate-BC	Percent	66.0	66.6	66.3	65.7	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total EI Benefits Paid-BC*	$Million	2,382.2	1,732.4	1,562.7	1,564.2	37.5	10.9	-0.1
Regular EI Benefits Paid-BC*	$Million	1,643.0	807.4	694.3	723.7	103.5	16.3	-4.1
Average Weekly Wage Rate-BC	Dollars	800.50	780.85	747.84	726.02	2.5	4.4	3.0
Wages and Salaries-BC*	$Million	89,091.7	90,831.3	86,213.2	81,623.0	-1.9	5.4	5.6
Fixed-Weighted Earnings Index-BC*	1996=100	122.9	119.9	115.6	111.2	2.5	3.7	4.0
PRODUCTION - BC								
Lumber-Cubic Metres*	Thousand	22,974.6	28,191.6	36,677.3	41,050.7	-18.5	-23.1	-10.7
Market Pulp Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	3,708	4,021	4,717	4,736	-7.8	-14.8	-0.4
Newsprint Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	417	615	846	1,059	-32.2	-27.3	-20.1
Other Paper Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	1,604	1,899	1,917	1,960	-15.5	-0.9	-2.2
Coal-Tonnes*	Thousand	21,193.0	26,163.0	25,941.0	23,161.0	-19.0	0.9	12.0
Oil-Cubic Metres*	Thousand	1,272.5	1,341.8	1,529.2	1,670.6		-12.3	-8.5
Natural Gas-Cubic Metres*	Million	-	32,300.3	31,815.5	35,291.7		1.5	-9.8
Electric Power Generated*	GW.h	62,205.6	65,855.5	72,217.0	62,021.4	-5.5	-8.8	16.4
Solid Mineral Shipments	$Million	5,733.6	7,402.0	5,611.4	5,990.6	-22.5	31.9	-6.3
Farm Cash Receipts**	$Million	2,421.6	2,494.5	2,391.6	2,335.6		4.3	2.4
Manufacturing Shipments*	$Million	32,716.1	39,759.5	42,526.4	44,479.9	-17.7	-6.5	-4.4
GENERAL								
Housing Starts-All Areas BC**	Thousand	16.1	34.3	39.2	36.4	-53.2	-12.4	7.6
Housing Starts-USA	Thousand	554.0	905.5	1,355.0	1,800.9	-38.8	-33.2	-24.8
Building Permits-BC*	$Million	7,629.9	10,577.2	12,544.7	11,541.5	-27.9	-15.7	8.7
Residential-BC*	$Million	4,491.1	6,899.3	8,611.7	7,620.7	-34.9	-19.9	13.0
Non-Residential-BC*	$Million	3,138.8	3,677.9	3,933.0	3,920.8	-14.7	-6.5	0.3
Retail Sales (NAICS)-BC*	$Million	53,675.0	56,562.4	56,365.4	52,837.1	-5.1	0.3	6.7
Wholesale Trade (NAICS)-BC*	$Million	48,616.0	52,856.6	53,390.7	49,293.5	-8.0	-1.0	8.3
Tourism Room Revenues-BC*	$Thousand	1,747.0	1,977.5	1,964.0	1,807.6	-11.7	0.7	8.6
Business Bankruptcies-BC*	Number	380	454	470	587	-16.3	-3.4	-19.9
Consumer Bankruptcies-BC*	Number	10,639	7,293	6,651	7,022	45.9	9.7	-5.3
Incorporations-BC*	Number	26,431	30,085	34,036	33,273	-12.1	-11.6	2.3
Exports Originating in BC*	$Million	25,193.8	33,154.5	31,512.0	33,466.0	-24.0	5.2	-5.8
Capital Expenditures-BC	$Million	40,257.2	46,935.8	42,669.6	39,912.2	-14.2	10.0	6.9
Population of BC (as at July 1)	Number	4,455,207	4,383,845	4,309,453	4,243,580	1.6	1.7	1.6

* derived from monthly figures
**derived from quarterly figures

dash (-) indicates not available

n/a = not applicable

May 28, 2010

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

	YEAR				PERCENT CHANGE		
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07
BRITISH COLUMBIA (Millions $Cdn) *Nov. 2009*							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	-	197,931	191,598	182,310		3.3	5.1
Real Gross Domestic Product (chained 2002 $)	-	164,520	164,519	159,916		0.0	2.9
CANADA (Millions $Cdn) *Nov. 2009*							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	1,527,670	1,600,081	1,532,944	1,449,215	-4.5	4.4	5.8
Real GDP at Market Prices (chained 2002 $)	1,286,431	1,321,360	1,315,907	1,283,419	-2.6	0.4	2.5
UNITED STATES (Billions $US) **							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	14,256.3	14,441.4	14,077.6	13,398.9	-1.3	2.6	5.1
Real GDP at Market Prices (chained 2005 $US)	12,987.4	13,312.2	13,254.1	12,976.2	-2.4	0.4	2.1

*** US Department of Commerce, March 26, 2010*

INTEREST AND EXCHANGE RATES

(Source: Bank of Canada)

	May 26/10	Apr. 28/10	Apr. 21/10	May 27/09
	PERCENT PER ANNUM			
CANADA				
Prime Business Rate	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25
Bank Rate	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Marketable Government Bond Rate (over 10 years)	3.58	3.99	4.02	4.11
Conventional Mortgages - 1 Year	3.70	3.80	3.60	3.90
- 5 Years	5.99	6.25	6.10	5.25
UNITED STATES				
Prime Rate	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
EXCHANGE RATES	AVERAGE NOON SPOT RATE ($CDN)			
US Dollar	1.0651	1.0128	1.0008	1.1120
Japanese Yen	0.0118	0.0108	0.0107	0.0117
UK Pound Sterling	1.5336	1.5349	1.5371	1.7864
European Euro	1.3020	1.3298	1.3360	1.5483

FORECASTS

	Real GDP			Unemployment Rate		Consumer Price Index	
	2009e	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
	% Change	*% Change*	*% Change*	*%*	*%*	*% Change*	*% Change*
BRITISH COLUMBIA							
BC Government (March 2010 Budget)	-2.7	2.2	2.3	7.9	7.7	1.8	2.0
Central 1 Credit Union (January 2010)	-3.1	2.5	2.6	8.1	7.8	1.5	1.8
Scotiabank Group (May 5, 2010)	-2.3	3.8	3.1	7.8	7.6	-	-
TD Bank (May 26, 2010)	-2.0	3.7	3.1	7.0	6.5	1.5	2.0
CIBC WM Economics (March 15, 2010)	-2.7	3.2	3.4	-	-	-	-
Global Insight (May 2010)	-2.3	3.6	3.1	7.6	6.9	1.8	2.0
CANADA							
Scotiabank Group (May 5, 2010)	-2.6	3.4	2.8	8.2	8.0	1.9	2.4
TD Bank (May 26, 2010)	-2.6	3.5	2.9	8.1	7.6	1.7	1.9
CIBC WM Economics (April 29, 2010)	-2.6	3.1	2.5	8.2	8.1	1.9	2.1
Global Insight (May 2010)	-2.6	3.4	3.5	8.0	7.6	1.9	2.0
UNITED STATES							
Scotiabank Group (May 5, 2010)	-2.4	3.5	2.8	9.6	9.0	2.3	2.4
TD Bank (March 18, 2010)	-2.8	3.1	3.2	9.6	9.0	2.1	1.7
CIBC WM Economics (April 29, 2010)	-2.4	3.0	2.5	9.8	9.4	1.7	2.0
Global Insight (May 2010)	-2.4	3.0	3.0	9.6	9.0	1.9	2.0

e - estimate *dash (-) indicates not available* May 28, 2010